

Pointing Device with Force-Sensitive Resistor

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An input device with a pressure-sensitive element using a force-sensing resistor. A solid elastomeric material is mounted over the force-sensing resistor to transfer a force from the user's finger to the force-sensitive resistor without visible deformation of the elastomeric material. This provides a comfortable button for a user which does not require the compression of a domed cap to provide pressure-sensing input. In another aspect of the invention, a pressure-sensing input element utilizes both the amount of pressure and the amount of time to determine the type of signal provided to the electronic system. In another aspect of the present invention, an input device contains a first scrolling element (e.g. a wheel) and includes a switch button mounted close to the scrolling element to activate continuous scrolling. In one embodiment of the invention, the force-sensing resistor used is a folded-over metal-coated plastic film which is responsive to very low activation forces, such as forces less than 50 grams.

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